

THE TRVE REPORT
of the burning of the Steple
and Churche of Poules ^M
in London. ^{14.}

Jeremy. xviii. v. 7, 8.

I wyll speake suddenlye agaynst a nati-
on, or agaynst a kynchedome, to plucke
it vp, and to roote it out, and distroye
it. But ys that nation , agaynst
whome I haue pronounced, turne
from their wickednes, I wyll re-
pent of the plague that I thought
to bryng vpon
them.

15.
Imprynted at London, at
the west ende of Paules Church,
at the sygne of the Wedghogge
by Wyllyam
Heres.

*Cum privilegio ad imprimendum
solum.*

Anno. 1561. The. x. of Iune.



The true reporte of the
burninge of the Steple and
Church of Paules in London.

On Wednesday beinge
the fourthe daye of
June, in the yeare of
our Lord. 1561. and in
the thyrdye yeare of the reigne of
our soueraygne Ladye Elizabeth
by the grace of God, Queene of
Englannde, Fraunce and Irelannde,
defender of the faith. &c. betwene
one and two of the clocke at after
noone, was seene a maruellous
great fyre lightning, and imme-
diately insued a most terrible hys-
deous cracke of thunders, suche as
seldom hath been heard, and that
by estimacion of sense, directlye
over the Citie of London. At which
instante the corner of a turrett of
steple of saint Martins Churche
within Ludgate was torne, and

The true report of the
divers great stones casten down,
and a hole broken throught he the
roofe & timber of the said church,
by the fall of the same stones.

for divers persones in tyme
of the saide tempest being on the
riuer of Thamys, and others be-
yng in the fieldes nere adioyning
to þ Citie, affirmed that thei saw
a long and a speare pointed flame
of fier (as it were) runne through
the toppe of the Broche or ſhaft
of Paules Steple, from the Caste
Westwarde. And some of the pa-
rish of saint Martins then being
in the streare, dyd feele a maruey-
lous strong ayre or whorlewynd,
with a ſmel lyke Brimſtone, com-
ming from Paules Churche, and
withal heard the rulche of þ ſtones
which fell frō their ſteple into the
churche. Betwenz. iiiii. and five of
the

the clocke a smoke was espied by
diuers to breake oute vnder the
bowle of the said shaf. of Danles.
& namely by Peter Johnson prin-
cipall Register to the Bishop of
Londō, who immediatly brought
wordē to the Bishops house. But
sodeinly after, as it wer in a mos-
mente, the flame brake furth in a
circle like a garlande rounde a-
bout the broche, about two yards
to the estimation of sight vnder the
bowle of the said shaft, & increased
in suchē wise, that within a quar-
ter of an houre, or litle more, the
crosse & th̄ Egle on the toppe fell
downe vpon the south crosse. The
Lord Maior being sent for, &
his brethren, came with all speeche
possible, & had a short consultacio-
n as in such a case might be, with y^e
Bishop of London and others, for
the

The true report of the

þ best way of remedy. And thither
came also þ Lord keper of þ great
Seale, & the Lord Treasurer, who
by their wisedom and authoritie
dyrected as good order, as in so
great a confusio could possible be.

Some there wer, pretending ex-
perience in warres, that coueled
the remanente of the steeple to bee
shot down with Canons, whiche
counsel was not liked, as most pe-
nitious both for the dispersing the
fire, and destruccio of houses and
people, other perceiving the steeple
to be past al reconery, considering
the hugenes of the fier, & the drop-
ping of the lead, thought besste to
geat ladders & scale the churche,
& with axes to hew down a space
of the roofe of the Churche, to stay
the fier, at the leaste to saue sone
part of the saide churche, whiche
was

was concluded. But before þ ladders & buckets could be brought, & things put in any order, and especially because the churche was of such height, that ther could not skale it, & no sufficiente nomber of axes could be had, þ labozers also being troubled with þ multitude of ydle gasters, the mooste parte of the higheste roofe of the Churche was on fier.

Fyrst the fall of the Crosse and Egle fired the southe crosse þle, whiche þle was fyrste consumed, the beaines & brands of the steple fell down on euery side, & fired the other thre partes, that is to saye, the Chauancel or Quiet, the north þle, & the body of the church. So that in one howres space þ broch of the steple was brent downe to þ battlementes, & the most part of þ

highest roofe of the churche, like
wise consumed. The state of the
steple & churche seming both des-
perate: my Lord Mayor was ad-
vised by one maister Winter of y
admiraltie, to conuerte the moste
part of his care & prouisio to pres-
serue the Bishops palace adiop-
nyng to the North west end of the
churche: least so that house beinge
large, the fier might sprede to the
fateres adiowing. Whereupon the
ladders, buckets, & laborers, were
commaunded thitherto, & by greate
labor & diligence, a piece of y roofe
of the Northe Ile was cut down,
& the fier so stayed, and by muche
water, that parte quenched, and y
said Bishops house preserved. It
pleased god also at the same tyme
bothe to turne & calme the wind,
which afore was behemēt, & con-
tinued

enned stil high & greate in other
partes without þ citie. There wer
aboue. v. C. persons þ laboured in
caryng a fillig water &c. Diuers
substantiall Citizengs toke paynes
as if thei had bene labozers, so did
also diuers & sondrye gentlemen,
whose names wer not knownen to
the writer hereof, but amongst oþ
ther, the said M. Winter, & one. M
Stranguish, did both take nota
ble paines in their own persons, &
also much directed & encouraged
other, and that not without great
daunger to theselies. In þ euening
came the Lord Clinton, Lord ad
miral frô þ court at Grenewiche,
whô the Queenes maiesty assone
as the rage of the fier was espied
by her maiestye and others in the
court, of the pitifull inclinacion &
loue that her gracious highnesse

DyD.

The true report of the
dyd brare both to þ laid church &
the citie, sente to assynt my Lorde
Marpur for the suppreßyng of the
fyre, who with his wylsome, au-
thority & diligēt trauayl did very
much good therin. About. x. of the
clocke the fyrcenes of the fyre
was past, the tymbre being fallen
and lyngre brenninge vpon the
baultes of stone, the baultes yet
god be thanked standyng vnpes-
tished: so as onelye the tymbre of
the hole church was consumed, a
lge lead molten, sauynge the most
parte of the two lowe Iles of the
Quare, and a piecē of the north
Ile, and an other smal piecē of þ
louthe Ile, in the bodys of the
churche. Not withstandyng all
whiche, it pleased the merciful god
in his wrath to remēbre his mer-
cie, and to enclose the harme of
this

burning of Poules.

this most fperce and terrible fyre,
wythin the walles of thys one
church, not extending any part of
his wrath in this fyre vpon the
rest of the Citie, whiche to all rea-
son and sence of man was subiect
to bitter destruction . For in
the hole city without the churche
no stycke was kyndled surelye.
Notwithstanding that in divers
partes, & stretes, and within the
houses bothe adioyninge and of a
good distaunce, as in Fleetestrete, &
newgate market , by the violence
of fyre, burninge coles of greate
bignesse , fell downe almoost as
thicke as haylstones , and flawes
of lead were blowen abrode into
the gardins without the Citie, like
flawes of snow in hirthe winte
hurte god be thanked, to any house
or pevle, Many sond tales goe as
brode

The true report of the
brede of the original cause of this
fier. Some say, it was negligence
of plumbers, whereas by due
examinacion it is proued that no
plumbers or other workmen la-
bored in the churche for sixe mon-
ethes before. Other suspect it
was done by som wicked practise
of wildfyre or gunpouder, but no
iust suspicioous therof by any exa-
minacion can be founde hitherto.
Some suspect coniurers & sorcer-
ers, wherof there is also no great
likelyhode. And if it hadde bene
wrought þ waie, yet could not the
devil haue done it, without Gods
permisso, & so som purpose of his
unsercheable iudgements, as appe-
reth in the story of Job. The true
cause as it semeth, was the tempest
by gods suffrance: for it cannot be
otherwise gathered, but that at þ
said great & terrible thunderclap,

when sainte Martins steple was
corne, the lightning which by na-
tural order smiteth þ highest, did
first smite þ top of Paules steple,
and entring in at the small holes
which haue alwaies remained o-
pen for building skaffoldes to the
works, & finding the timber very
olde & drie, did kindle þ same, & so
þ fier increasing grew to a flame
& wrought þ effecte which follow-
ed, most terrible then to behold, &
now most lamentable to looke on.

On Sonday following beyng
the. viii. day of June, the reuerend
in god, the Bishop of Duresme, at
Paules crosse made a learned &
fruitful sermon, exhorting the au-
ditory to a general repentance, &
namely to humble obediēce of the
la wes & superiorz powerz, whiche
vertue is muche decayed in these
our daies: seming to haue intellip-

gēce from the Queenes highnes
that her maiestie intendeth tha
more severitie of lawes shalbe ex
ecuted against persons disobedient,
aswell in causes of religiō, a
civil, to the great reioysing of his
auditours. He exhorted also his
audiēce to take this as a generall
warninge to the whole realme,
namelye to the citie of London, of
some greater plague to folow, if a
mendmente of lyfe in all states
did not ensue: He muche reproved
those persons whiche woulde as
signe the cause of this wraethe of
god to any particular state of me
or that were diligent to loke into
other mens lyues, & coulde see no
faultes in themselves: but wished
that every man wold descend in
to himselfe and say with David
Ego sum qui peccavi. I am he that hath
sinned, and so furth to that effect

burning of paule.

þerþe godlye. he also not onely reþ
þroued the prophanyon of the
said Churche of Paules of longe
time heretoþe abused by walkig,
þangling, brawling, fighting, bar-
gaining. &c. namely in Sermons
þe seruice time: but also auþwered
þy the way to the obiectiþs of such
euil tunninged persõs, which do im-
pute this token of gods deserued
þre, to alteraciþ, or rather reforma-
þiþ of religiþ, declaring out of aucti-
þent records & histories, þ like, þea-
& greater waters had befallen in
þ time of supersticiþ & ignorance.
þor in þ first yere of king Stephæ
not only þ said church of Paules
was bræt, but also a great part of
þ city, þ is to say, frō Londõ bridge
onto þ. Clemëts without Cœple
bar, was by fier cōsumed. And in
þ daies of king Hēry þ. vi. þ steeple
of Pauleg was also ficed by lights

The true report of the
king, although it was then staid
by diligēce of þ Citizens, þ fier be-
ing thē by likelyhode not so fierce.
Many other sūche like cōmon ca-
lamities he rehersed, whiche had
happened in other coutries, both
migh to this realm & far of, wher
þ church of Rome hath most au-
thority, & therefore coeluded þ su-
rest way to be, þ every man should
judge, examin, & amēd himselfe, &
embrace, beleue, and truely follow
þ word of god, & earnestly to pray
to god to turn away frō vs his de-
serued wrath & indignaciō, wher-
of this his terrible work is a most
certein warning, if we repent not
unfeinedly. The whiche god grāt
maye come to passe in all estates
& degrees, to þ glory of his name
and to oure endelesse conforte in
Christ our saviour. Amen.

God save the Queene.

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